OVERLAND DATA WORKS BEHIND THE SCENES TO ACCELERATE DATA BACKUP, SAVE SPACE FOR LEADING CUSTOMER INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY

As Customer Relationship Management (CRM) applications grow in importance, any problems information management companies face in gathering and processing demographic data for CRM tend to attract more attention than the challenges the information management companies encounter in organizing and storing their internal systems data. Yet, "behind the scenes" management and storage of systems data is crucial to the health of any information management company. The complexity of managing data storage is especially apparent with a company such as TARGUS Information Corporation, that generates huge amounts of systems data.

Many retailers, call centers, e-merchants, and other businesses whose customers contact them by telephone, the Internet, or wireless devices rely on TARGUS Information Corporation to provide them with real-time demographic information about these customers. Businesses use the TARGUSinfo Intelligence Portal™ to instantly identify, profile, analyze and process millions of customer and prospect transactions. Through patented processes, TARGUSinfo links virtually every household telephone number in the United States with a name, address, predictive scores on buying behavior, and lifestyle activities. The instantaneous information TARGUS provides enables and accelerates CRM applications, allowing these businesses to anticipate their customers' preferences and respond quickly and efficiently to customers' orders or requests for information. Fortune 500 companies that employ TARGUS' services include AT&T, FedEx, UPS, Universal Studios, America Online, HBO, Pizza Hut, Budget Rent a Car, Bell Atlantic and Sprint.

To keep its data-intensive operations running smoothly, TARGUS strives to be as efficient in gathering and backing up its internal data as it is in providing data to its customers. So when data backup became too time-consuming, and the backup system TARGUS was using began to take up too much shelf space, TARGUS turned to Overland's AIT LibraryPro™ rackmount library for a solution that saves space and time.

TARGUS maintains a vast amount of systems information and production data, including many thousands of text files and registry data, on ten Dell 2450 PowerEdge Windows NT Servers. Data manipulation and storage is carried out at a TARGUS facility in Del Mar, Calif., near San Diego. In addition, TARGUS has a co-location site at Kearney Mesa, another San Diego suburb. At this site, which is operated by Level3 Communications, TARGUS has production servers, Web servers and data storage servers.

Day-Long Backups, and a Shortage of Space

As Anthony Miguel, Technical Support Specialist at TARGUS explains, "in carrying out the remote management of a backup solution for the Dell servers, we were using a T1 line and a Qualstar 10 system to backup 20 to 50 GB of data each week at the Kearney Mesa co-location site. Unfortunately, with this system, backups were taking an entire day, and tying up the T1 line. We realized that in addition to reducing the data transfer time, we needed a more compact, space-saving solution for data backup. The Qualstar unit we were using at the co-location site was large – larger than most of our newer servers, and it did not fit in a rackmount setting. Since our real estate at that site is expensive, we needed a backup solution that was small, but one that could easily handle the large amount of data that needed to be backed up. The Qualstar system held only 10 tapes. This meant we had to go to the co-location site every two weeks or so to swap out the tapes."

A Space Saving Unit that Backs Up Data in Minutes

At the suggestion of reseller Zzyzx, TARGUS purchased Overland's AIT LibraryPro, a system that can back up data at up to 1 TB per hour. "Backup is much, much faster now," says Miguel. "In fact, our weekly backup takes only minutes, instead of a day. Also, we are able to use an internal network for transmission, instead of the T-1, so we can save the T-1 for data updates, monitoring and remote administration. In addition to a weekly backup each Sunday, we do differential backups Monday through Saturday. We also do a monthly backup. LibraryPro not only speeds up the backup process, but also, because it is available in a rackmount configuration, solves the space problem, too. LibraryPro's 4U (6.7 inches x 17.3 inches x 24 inches) size allows it to fit perfectly into our co-location cabinets. Also, it matches nicely with the size 2U Dell servers."

Using ARCserve from Computer Associates (CA), a complete storage management platform that provides end-to-end protection of the enterprise from desktop to mainframe, TARGUS achieved record-breaking performance, easy administration and unsurpassed reliability. An extensive suite of options offer additional client/server support, enhanced performance and automation, online backup of business applications, and fast disaster recovery. ARCserve automates every traditional storage management task, lowers operating expenses, reduces errors and enables administrators to easily perform essential data protection routines.

"We are very pleased with LibraryPro," Miguel says. "It runs beautifully and it looks great, too. And it's the same color as our Dell servers! Even though we are constantly increasing the data we need to backup, the library's 18-tape capacity, and its ability to store up to 22 TB of data, will probably last us for quite some time. The tape drive is great. If we get to the point where we need additional storage, I would definitely consider another Overland product."

Customer Profile

Company Name: TARGUS Information Services
Location: Nationwide; this application in San Diego, CA area
Industry: Instant information services for companies whose customers contact them by phone, internet, or wireless devices
Environment: Dell 2450 PowerEdge NT Servers
Backup requirements: 20 –50 GB weekly
Compatibility requirements: Computer Associates ARCserve
Prior backup: Qualstar 10; still employed for some applications
Overland solution: AIT LibraryPro rackmount library, used at co-location site, significantly speeds up data backup process, saves space, and looks good with the servers